

Declaration of Mich P. Gonzalez

I, Mich P. Gonzalez, make the following declaration based on my personal knowledge and declare under the penalty of perjury pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746 that the following is true and correct:

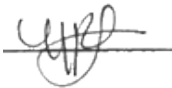
1. My name is Mich P. Gonzalez and I am an immigration and civil rights attorney licensed to practice by the State of New York. I am a co-founding partner of Sanctuary of the South, LLC and our business address is 251 Valencia Avenue, Ste. 140, Coral Gables, FL 33134.
2. On February 20, 2025, an Immigration Judge (“IJ”) sitting in the Immigration Court at the Krome Service Processing Center (“Krome”) in Miami, Florida granted my client protection in the form of withholding of removal to Guatemala due to severe past persecution and threat of future persecution on account of her identity as a transgender woman and sexual minority. On this same date, our office contacted the relevant Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) Enforcement and Removal Operations (“ERO”) officers overseeing her custody at the Krome facility to urge her release, attaching the IJ’s order.
3. On February 24, 2025, DHS Supervisory Detention and Deportation Officer Jahmal Ervin (“SDDO Ervin”) responded via electronic correspondence stating, “[y]our client is not being released at this time as his case is still being processed for removal efforts.”
4. Our office immediately replied requesting the names of the country or countries to which DHS was seeking to remove our client.
5. Neither Officer Jahmal Ervin, nor the Miami ERO Acting Field Office Director nor the Acting Krome Assistant Field Office Director (collectively “ICE”) ever responded substantively to this request.

6. Concerned about ICE's stated intention to remove our client and refusal to provide the names of any third country to which they were seeking removal, we filed a motion to reopen removal proceedings with the sitting IJ at Krome who had granted withholding on February 20, 2025. We filed the motion to reopen on February 25, 2025 and on March 1, 2025, the IJ denied on the grounds that it was premature as Respondent was not seeking protection from removal to any particular country. Please see attached order.
7. Our office followed up over a dozen times in the weeks that followed with emails to ICE seeking answers to ensure due process for our client. We informed ICE of the ongoing danger to our client by remaining in detention due to her status as a transgender woman and repeatedly requested information regarding ICE's intentions to remove her to a third country. These emails received no substantive response.
8. On or about March 24, 2025, our client informed us that the risks to her safety became a reality when she was sexually assaulted in the showers at Krome—an assault reportedly witnessed by officers at Krome in or about mid-March 2025.
9. We again contacted ICE, informing them of this assault and requesting information about ICE's investigation and responsibilities under the Prison Rape Elimination Act. We have yet to receive any substantive response to these requests.
10. On or about March 29, 2025, our client disappeared from Krome and could not be found on the ICE Locator for nearly three days. We again contacted ICE, requesting information as to our client's whereabouts. Again, these emails were ignored until finally her assigned deportation officer Kristy Zamir wrote back simply stating that "[client's name and immigration number] is located at Eloy, AZ, Service Processing Center."

11. We were finally able to make contact with our client, who confirmed that she had inexplicably been transferred to the Eloy Service Processing Center (“Eloy”) in Arizona. She also informed us that she was not provided any information about her transfer or any attempts ICE is making to remove her to a third country.
12. We contacted ICE once again, by email, requesting they please confirm the reason for her transfer and whether ICE was attempting to deport her to a third country. This information, once again, was not provided.
13. As of today, our client allegedly remains at Eloy. However, she is no longer reflected in the ICE detainee locator website and we fear for her imminent and unlawful deportation to a third country without notice or opportunity to present arguments that such deportation places her at risk.

I affirm under penalty of perjury that the aforementioned is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Dated: April 3, 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MPG', is written over a horizontal line.

Mich P. Gonzalez, Esq.



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR IMMIGRATION REVIEW
MIAMI KROME IMMIGRATION COURT**

Respondent Name:

[REDACTED]

To:

Blankenship, Katherine Holloway
6355 NW 36th Street
Suit 609
Virginia Gardens, FL 33166

A-Number:

[REDACTED]

Riders:

In Withholding Only Proceedings

Initiated by the Department of Homeland Security

Date:

03/01/2025

ORDER OF THE IMMIGRATION JUDGE

Respondent's Motion to Reopen

Order:

The motion to reopen is denied as premature. At this time, Respondent is not seeking protection from removal to any particular country.



Immigration Judge: LERNER, ROMY 03/01/2025

Appeal: Department of Homeland Security: ☒ waived ☐ reserved
Respondent: ☐ waived ☒ reserved
Appeal Due: 04/02/2025

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Respondent Name : [REDACTED] | A-Number : [REDACTED]

Riders:

Date: 03/02/2025 By: Murgado, Letty, Court Staff